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EXAMINER	
ROBINSON BOYCE, AKIBA K	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary	**Application No.** 10/678,034	**Applicant(s)** NGUYEN ET AL.
	Examiner Akiba K. Robinson-Boyce	**Art Unit** 3639

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 September 2003.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) 1-57 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) 1-57 is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 September 2003 is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/19/04.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. Due to communications filed 9/30/03, the following is a non-final first office action. Claims 1-57 are pending in this application and have been examined on the merits. Claims 1-57 have been rejected as follows.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7-9, 20, 30-36, 38-39, 42, 43, 45, 46-52, and 57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McGauley et al (US 5,899,998).

As per claims 1, 38, McGauley et al discloses:

a service provider system having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules/maintaining service provider system having... (col. 4, lines 61-65, administrative service systems utilizing rules);

a point of service device having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules/maintaining a point of service device having..., (Col. 4, lines 61-65, point of service stations utilizing rules); and

a portable device having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules/maintaining a portable device having..., (Col. 5, lines 27-30 and Fig. 7, rules set used to handle communication updates between portable data carrier and point of service stations);

wherein the portable device and the point of service device use their associated plurality of rules and plurality of meta-rules to determine an outcome for a transaction/determining an outcome... (Abstract, lines 6-16, interaction between portable device and point of service ties distributed databases together where database systems then use update object to distribute data as a result of a transaction as shown in col. 3, line 66-col. 4, line 10, also shows rule sets are applied to portable device and point of sale); and

wherein if the portable device and the point of service device are unable to determine the outcome for the transaction, the point of service device uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of the plurality of rules associated with either the portable device or the point of service device can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system/if the outcome can not be determined..., (Col. 14, lines 56-61, administrative service used as back-up in case o fail).

McGauley et al fails to specifically disclose that each service provider, point of service device, and portable device have a plurality of meta-rules, but this feature is obvious with McGauley et al since McGauley et al does disclose a second processing rules set in Col. 27, lines 17-22. In this case, this second processing rules set is applied to information stored in the database, where this type of information is effected by transactions that occur between portable data carriers, and point-of-service stations as shown in the abstract, lines 6-9, and in turn, the administrative services.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to implement meta-rules with the motivation of having an extra set of rule that can be applied in a scenario where the first set of rules can not be applied.

As per claims 4, 5, 35, 42, 43, 51, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein the point of service device uses historical transaction information to update the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the portable device in order to render processing of transactions more efficient/wherein the service provider system uses historical transaction information to update the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated respectively with the portable device and the point of service device in order to render processing of transactions more efficient/wherein the first node uses historical transaction information to update the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with a node having a node order that is equal to or lower than that of the first noted in order to render processing of transactions more efficient/directing the point of service to use historical transaction information.../directing the service provider system to use historical transaction information...(col. 20, lines 35-38, automatically store historic record as an update object is routed, therefore each time an update occurs, the historic information is part of the stored information and is therefore accessed when addition al updates occur, also, both the portable device and the point of service are updated concurrently as shown in col. 16, lines 36-37).

As per claims 7, 36, 45, 52, McGauley et al discloses:

Wherein the system is implemented using software, hardware or a combination of both, (col. 6, lines 19-21, hardware and software).

As per claims 8, 33, 49, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein the portable device includes a smart card, a memory stick, a dongle, a personal digital assistant, a cellular phone and a pager, (Abstract, lines 4-5, smart card).

As per claims 9, 34, 50, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein the point of service device includes a personal computer, a point of sale device, a kiosk, an automatic teller machine and a cellular phone, (col. 6, lines 21-22, personal computer).

As per claim 20, McGauley et al discloses:

a plurality of service provider systems, each service provider system having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, (col. 5, lines 49-50, one or more administrative services systems, w/ col. 4, lines 61-65, administrative service systems utilizing rules);

a plurality of point of service devices, each point of service device having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, (Col. 5 lines 46-48, plurality of point of service terminals, w/ Col. 4, lines 61-65, point of service stations utilizing rules); and a plurality of portable devices, each portable device having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, (Col. 5, lines 46-47, a plurality of portable devices, w/ Col. 5, lines 27-30 and Fig. 7, rules set used to handle communication updates between portable data carrier and point of service stations);

wherein a first portable device uses its associated plurality of rules to determine an outcome for a transaction, (Abstract, lines 6-16, interaction between portable device and point of service ties distributed databases together where database systems then use update object to distribute data as a result of a transaction as shown in col. 3, line 66-col. 4, line 10, also shows rule sets are applied to portable device and point of sale); and

wherein if the first portable device is unable to determine the outcome for the transaction using its associated plurality of rules, the first portable device uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request a first point of service device to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the first point of service device, (Col. 14, lines 56-61, administrative service used as back-up in case o fail).

McGauley et al fails to specifically disclose that each service provider, point of service device, and portable device have a plurality of meta-rules, but this feature is obvious with McGauley et al since McGauley et al does disclose a second processing rules set in Col. 27, lines 17-22. In this case, this second processing rules set is applied to information stored in the database, where this type of information is effected by transactions that occur between portable data carriers, and point-of-service stations as shown in the abstract, lines 6-9, and in turn, the administrative services.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to implement meta-rules with the motivation of having an extra set of rule that can be applied in a scenario where the first set of rules can not be applied.

As per claims 30, 46, McGauley et al discloses:

a plurality of nodes/maintaining a plurality of nodes, each node having a node order and having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, (col. 4, lines 61-65, administrative service systems and point of service station utilizing rules, and Col. 5, lines 27-30 and Fig. 7, rules set used to handle communication updates between portable data carrier and point of service stations, where the nodes are represented by the administrative service system, the point of service station and the portable data carrier);

wherein a first node uses/directing a first node to use its associated plurality of rules to determine an outcome for a transaction, (Abstract, lines 6-16, interaction between portable device and point of service ties distributed databases together where database systems then use update object to distribute data as a result of a transaction as shown in col. 3, line 66-col. 4, line 10, also shows rule sets are applied to portable device and point of sale); and

wherein if the first node is unable to determine the outcome for the transaction using its associated plurality of rules, the first node uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request a second node having a node order that is equal to or higher than that of the first node to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the second node, (Col. 14, lines 56-61, administrative service used as back-up in case of fail).

McGauley et al fails to specifically disclose that each service provider, point of service device, and portable device have a plurality of meta-rules, but this feature is obvious with McGauley et al since McGauley et al does disclose a second processing rules set in Col. 27, lines 17-22. In this case, this second processing rules set is applied to information stored in the database, where this type of information is effected by transactions that occur between portable data carriers, and point-of-service stations as shown in the abstract, lines 6-9, and in turn, the administrative services.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to implement meta-rules with the motivation of having an extra set of rule that can be applied in a scenario where the first set of rules can not be applied.

As per claims 31, 39, 47, McGauley et al discloses:

Wherein if the second node is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the second node uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request a third node having a node order that is equal to or higher than that of the second node to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the third node/if the outcome can not be determined using the plurality of rules associated with the point of service device, using the plurality of meta-rules associated with the point of service device to either determine whether one or more of the plurality of rules associated with the point of service device can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system, (Col. 14, lines 56-61, administrative service used as back-up in case of fail).

As per claims 32, 48, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein the first node includes a portable device, the second node includes a point of service device and the third node includes a service provider system, (col. 4, lines 61-65, administrative service systems and point of service station utilizing rules, and Col. 5, lines 27-30 and Fig. 7, rules set used to handle communication updates between portable data carrier and point of service stations).

As per claims 57, McGauley et al discloses:

Wherein the plurality of rules include one or more rules on communications routing between nodes, first node to collect data relating to the transaction, (Col. 12, lines 58-60, rules sets relating to routing update objects).

4. Claims 2-3, 6, 10-19, 21-29, 37, 40-41, 44, and 53-56, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McGauley et al (US 5,899,998), and further in view of Ginter at al (5,915,019).

As per claims 2, 40, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein if the portable device and the point of service device are unable to determine the outcome, the point of service device uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of the plurality of rules associated with either the portable device or the point of service device can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the network gateway to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the network gateway/if the outcome cannot be determined using the plurality of rules associated with the point of service device, using the plurality of meta-rules associated with the point of service device to either determine whether one or more of the plurality of rules associated with the point of service device can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the network gateway to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the network gateway, (col. 5, lines 27-30, shows rules sets to handle updates between portable device and point of service)

McGauley et al fails to disclose a network gateway/maintaining a network gateway having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

a network gateway/maintaining a network gateway having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, (col. 104, lines 2-6, shows rules applied through gateway). Ginter et al discloses the above limitation for the purpose of showing what is used to specify permissions.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to have as network gateway having associate therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules with the motivation of showing that the network gateway applies rules when participating in transactions.

As per claims 3, 41, McGauley et al fails to disclose wherein if the network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system/if the outcome cannot be determined using the plurality of rules associated with the network gateway, using the plurality of meta-rules associated with the network gateway to either determine whether one or more of the plurality of rules associated with the network gateway can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

wherein if the network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system/ if the outcome cannot be determined using the plurality of rules associated with the network gateway, using the plurality of meta-rules associated with the network gateway to either determine whether one or more of the plurality of rules associated with the network gateway can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system, (col. 104, lines 2-11, rules applied through gateway). Ginter et al discloses this limitation in an analogous art for the purpose of showing how rules are applied to form an object switch.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention for the network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system if the network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rule with the motivation of utilizing another rule specified for that particular gateway in order to achieve results the first set of rules were supposed to accomplish.

As per claims 6, 16, 26, 37, 44, 53, McGauley et al fails to disclose wherein the outcome for the transaction includes a price, but does disclose a distributed database network system provide cost-effective access to databases in col. 1, lines 41-43.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

wherein the outcome for the transaction includes a price, (col. 321, lines 31-33, price). Ginter et al discloses this limitation in an analogous art for the purpose of showing that a price must be paid for usage of file content.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention fort the outcome for a transaction to include price with the motivation of implementing a cost with a transactional service.

As per claim 10, McGauley et al discloses:

a service provider system having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, (col. 4, lines 61-65, administrative service systems utilizing rules);

a point of service device having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules(Col. 4, lines 61-65, point of service stations utilizing rules); and

a portable device having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, (Col. 5, lines 27-30 and Fig. 7, rules set used to handle communication updates between portable data carrier and point of service stations);

wherein the portable device uses its associated plurality of rules to determine an outcome for a transaction, (Abstract, lines 6-16, interaction between portable device and point of service ties distributed databases together where database systems then use update object to distribute data as a result of a transaction as shown in col. 3, line 66-col. 4, line 10, also shows rule sets are applied to portable device and point of sale); and

wherein if the portable device is unable to determine the outcome for the transaction using its associated plurality of rules, the portable device uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the point of service device to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the point of service device, (Col. 14, lines 56-61, administrative service used as back-up in case o fail).

McGauley et al fails to specifically disclose that each service provider, point of service device, and portable device have a plurality of meta-rules, but this feature is obvious with McGauley et al since McGauley et al does disclose a second processing rules set in Col. 27, lines 17-22. In this case, this second processing rules set is applied to information stored in the database, where this type of information is effected by transactions that occur between portable data carriers, and point-of-service stations as shown in the abstract, lines 6-9, and in turn, the administrative services.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to implement meta-rules with the motivation of having an extra set of rule that can be applied in a scenario where the first set of rules can not be applied.

McGauley et al fails to disclose a network gateway having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

(col. 104, lines 2-6, shows rules applied through gateway). Ginter et al discloses the above limitation for the purpose of showing what is used to specify permissions.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to have as network gateway having associate therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules with the motivation of showing that the network gateway applies rules when participating in transactions.

As per claim 11, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein if the point of service device is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the point of service device uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the network gateway to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the network gateway, (col. 5, lines 27-30, shows rules sets to handle updates between portable device and point of service).

As per claim 12, McGauley et al fails to disclose wherein if the network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

wherein if the network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system, (col. 104, lines 2-11, rules applied through gateway). Ginter et al discloses this limitation in an analogous art for the purpose of showing how rules are applied to form an object switch.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention for the network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system if the network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rule with the motivation of utilizing another rule specified for that particular gateway in order to achieve results the first set of rules were supposed to accomplish.

As per claims 13, 14, 15, 24, 25, McGauley discloses:

wherein the point of service device/the first point of service device uses historical transaction information to update the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the portable device in order to render processing of transactions more efficient/wherein the network gateway uses historical transaction information to update the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated respectively with the portable device and the point of service device in order to render processing of transactions more efficient/wherein the service provider system/first service provider system uses historical transaction information to update the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated respectively with the portable device, the point of service device and the network gateway in order to render processing of transactions more efficient (col. 20, lines 35-38, automatically store historic record as an update object is routed, therefore each time an update occurs, the historic information is part of the stored information and is therefore accessed when addition al updates occur, also, both the portable device and the point of service are updated concurrently as shown in col. 16, lines 36-37).

As per claims 17, 27, McGauley et al discloses:

Wherein the system is implemented using software, hardware or a combination of both, (col. 6, lines 19-21, hardware and software).

As per claim 18, 28, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein the portable device includes a smart card, a personal digital assistant, a cellular phone and a pager, (Abstract, lines 4-5, smart card).

As per claim 19, 29, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein the point of service device includes a personal computer, a point of sale device, a kiosk, an automatic teller machine and a cellular phone, (col. 6, lines 21-22, personal computer).

As per claim 21, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein if the first point of service device is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the first point of service device uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request a second point of service device or a first service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated respectively with the second point of service device and the first service provider system, (col. 5, lines 27-30, shows rules sets to handle updates between portable device and point of service).

As per claim 22, McGauley et al discloses:

wherein if the first point of service device is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the first point of service device uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request a second point of service device or a first network gateway to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated respectively with the second point of service device and the first network gateway, (col. 5, lines 27-30, shows rules sets to handle updates between portable device and point of service)

McGauley et al fails to disclose a plurality of network gateways, each network gateway having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

a plurality of network gateways, each network gateway having associated therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules, (col. 91, lines 50-55, mail gateway 782 may include one or more mail filters, [which are other gateways], w/col. 104, lines 2-6, shows rules applied through gateway). Ginter et al discloses the above limitation for the purpose of showing what is used to specify permissions.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to have as network gateway having associate therewith a plurality of rules and a plurality of meta-rules with the motivation of showing that the network gateway applies rules when participating in transactions.

As per claim 23, McGauley et al fails to disclose wherein if the first network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the first network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request a second network gateway or a first service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the second network gateway and the first service provider system, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

wherein if the first network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rules, the first network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request a second network gateway or a first service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the second network gateway and the first service provider system, (col. 104, lines 2-11, rules applied through gateway). Ginter et al discloses this limitation in an analogous art for the purpose of showing how rules are applied to form an object switch.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention for the network gateway uses its associated plurality of meta-rules to either determine whether one or more of its associated plurality of rules can be altered locally in order to determine the outcome or request the service provider system to help determine the outcome using the plurality of rules and the plurality of meta-rules associated with the service provider system if the network gateway is unable to determine the outcome using its associated plurality of rule with the motivation of utilizing another rule specified for that particular gateway in order to achieve results the first set of rules were supposed to accomplish.

As per claim 54, McGauley et al fails to disclose the following, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

wherein each node is configured to receive an administrative request, (Col. 175, lines 5-10, administrative request); and further comprising:

upon a node receiving the administrative request, directing the node to propagate one or more of it's associated plurality of rules or meta-rules to another node, (col. 175, lines 10-22, Budget method utilizes rules as shown).

Ginter et al discloses these limitations in an analogous art for the purpose of showing how rules are applied when a request is received.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to direct the node to propagate one or more of its associated plurality of rules or meta-rules to another node upon a node receiving the administrative request with the motivation of directing rules towards all entities involved in the transaction.

As per claim 55, McGauley et al fails to disclose the following, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

directing the first node to collect data relating to the transaction, (col. 175, lines 59-63, shows step of Budget method that obtains information. Ginter et al discloses this limitation in an analogous art for the purpose of showing that information may be obtained as needed from secure sources for administrative processing.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to direct the first node to collect data relating to the transaction with the motivation of obtaining the information needed to efficiently process the transaction.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

As per claim 56, McGauley et al fails to disclose the following, but does disclose a distributed database network system in col. 2, lines 31-34.

However, Ginter et al discloses:

wherein the plurality of rules use a plurality of data including transaction and event related data, device related data and environment related data, (Col. 15, lines 65-67, widely differing information types).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to utilize all types of data, including transaction, event, device and environment data with the motivation of having appropriate information needed to process the transaction.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Akiba K Robinson-Boyce whose telephone number is 571-272-6734. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Tuesday 8:30am-5pm, and Wednesday, 8:30 am-12:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on 571-272-6708. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7238 [After final communications, labeled "Box AF"], 703-746-7239 [Official Communications], and 703-746-7150 [Informal/Draft Communications, labeled "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT"].

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

ARB

A. R. B.
September 29, 2005

John W. Hayes

JOHN W. HAYES
PRIMARY EXAMINER